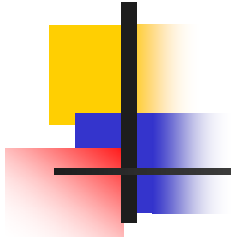




# Briefing National Dredging Team

---

July 9, 2003



# Briefing Objectives/Outline

---

- NDT Background
- Progress to Date
- New Action Agenda
- Beneficial Use of Dredged Material
- Other NDT Issues
- Next Steps



# Review of Dredging Process

---

- In 1993, the Secretary of Transportation convened an Interagency Working Group to investigate and recommend actions to improve the dredging process.
- In 1994, the Interagency Working Group delivered its report, *The Dredging Process in the United States: An Action Plan for Improvement* (Report), which proposed:
  - a National Dredging Policy, and
  - 18 recommendations to improve the dredging process.



# The National Dredging Team

---

- The National Dredging Team (NDT) was established in 1995 to:
  - serve as a forum to promote and implement the National Dredging Policy, and
  - implement the Report's recommendations.
- The NDT's main objectives include:
  - promoting consistency,
  - information exchange and conflict resolution,
  - creation and operation of Regional Dredging Teams and Local Planning/Project Groups,
  - interface with Marine Transportation System.



# NDT Composition

---

- The NDT is an interagency group of the following Federal agencies:
  - Army Corps of Engineers (co-chair)
  - Environmental Protection Agency (co-chair)
  - NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service
  - NOAA's National Ocean Service
  - Maritime Administration
  - Fish and Wildlife Service
- Other participants include U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Geological Survey, and Navy.



# National Dredging Policy

---

- The National Dredging Policy, which consists of 5 findings and 4 principles, is consistent with, and does not alter, the basic laws that apply to dredging.
- The findings refer to the importance of:
  - ports and harbors,
  - water resources,
  - consistent and integrated application of environmental statutes, and
  - close coordination and planning at all levels.



# National Dredging Policy (cont)

---

- The principles are:
  - The regulatory process must be timely, efficient, and predictable, to the maximum extent practicable.
  - Advanced dredged material management planning must be conducted on a regional scale by partnerships including all stakeholders.
  - Dredged material managers must become more involved in watershed planning to emphasize the importance of point and non-point source pollution controls to reduce harbor sediment contamination.
  - Dredged material is a resource, and environmentally-sound beneficial use must be encouraged.



# Progress on Recommendations

---

- Strengthening Planning Mechanisms:
  - *Local Planning Groups and Development of Dredged Material Management Plans Guidance.*
  - Beneficial Uses website.
  - *Dredged Material Management and State Coastal Management Programs* (1999 New Orleans Workshop Proceedings).
  - *Guidance Document for Development of Site Management Plans for Ocean Dredged Material Disposal Sites.*





## Progress (cont)

---

- Enhancing Coordination & Communication in Dredging Project Approval Process:
  - Established NDT in 1995.
  - Guidance on RDT creation and on procedures for elevating issues from RDTs to NDT.
  - Established 9 Regional Dredging Teams to date.
    - Great Lakes, North Atlantic, Southeast, Western Gulf, Southern CA, Northern CA, Pacific Northwest, Pacific Islands, and Alaska
    - Great Lakes RDT: <http://www.glc.org/dredging/>
  - National NDT and RDTs meeting June 1997.



## Progress (cont)

---

- Addressing Scientific Uncertainties:
  - Corps and EPA are developing guidance on interpreting bioaccumulation potential.
  - Funded NAS contaminated sediments studies; investigating innovative contaminated sediment remediation techniques.
- Funding Dredging Projects Consistently:
  - WRDA 1996 provides authority to reduce inconsistency between funding for open water and upland disposal.



# Regional Dredging Teams

---

- Great Lakes Dredging Team
  - Representatives from each state in the region meet annually
  - Great Lakes Beneficial Use Task Force
  - <http://www.glc.org/dredging>
- Northwest Dredging Team
  - Finalizing Charter
- Southern California Dredging Team
  - Contaminated Sediment Task Force working on Contaminated Sediment Management Strategy



# New Action Agenda

---

- In January 2001, the NDT sponsored a workshop to:
  - address issues currently facing dredging and dredged material management, and
  - provide a “mid-course correction” for the NDT.
- Nearly 250 participants representing government, industry, environmental interests, contractors, academia, and the general public attended.



# New Action Agenda (cont)

---

- Four subject areas were discussed:
  - Beneficial Uses of Dredged Material
  - Sediment Management
  - Emerging Issues
  - Strengthening Regional Dredging Teams
- Proposed actions were consolidated into 22 general and specific recommendations.
- This *Action Agenda for the Next Decade* (currently in draft form) will replace recommended actions in the 1994 report.



# Beneficial Uses Recommended Actions

---

- National guidance summarizing beneficial use authorities and processes.
- National guidance explaining role of Federal Standard in beneficial use projects.
- Encourage implementation of section 215 of WRDA 2000 (on direct marketing).
- Develop description of Corps' streamlined process for continuing authorities related to dredging, navigation, environmental restoration.

# Beneficial Uses

## Recommended Actions (cont)

---

- Identify sources of technical info and guidance on beneficial uses, identify data gaps, charge agencies to fill gaps.
- Encourage R&D on beneficial uses, make available info on demonstration projects.
- Identify specific potential local beneficial use projects and potential sponsors.
- Improve Beneficial Uses website.
- Identify factors needed to develop beneficial uses tracking system.



# Sediment Management Recommended Actions

---

- Identify existing local planning/project groups (LPGs) and dredged material management plans (DMMPs); encourage formation of new LPGs to develop DMMPs.
- Identify key elements of sediment management; incorporate them into LPG guidance as appropriate.
- Sponsor national workshop on sediment management with LPGs to share successes and lessons learned.





# Emerging Issues

## Recommended Actions

---

- Evaluate State Coastal Zone Management Plan requirements; develop guidance on consistency.
- Clarify how Essential Fish Habitat requirements relate to dredging.
- Continue to evaluate impact of environmental windows on dredging.
- Examine possible relationship between TMDLs and navigational dredging.



# Emerging Issues

## Recommended Actions (cont)

---

- Continue developing guidance on interpretation of dredged material testing results.
- Develop clearinghouse on dredging information, success stories, lessons learned.



# Strengthening RDTs

## Recommended Actions

---

- Ensure that each RDT has a charter and appropriate representatives.
- RDTs should involve all stakeholders, and prepare and implement an outreach plan.
- RDTs should facilitate development of Local Planning/Project Groups (LPGs) to develop Dredged Material Management Plans (DMMPs) and resolve local issues.
- Annual meeting for all RDTs and NDT.



# Next Steps for NDT

---

- NDT Steering Committee to:
  - approve Action Agenda,
  - sign new charter.
- National meeting with NDT and RDTs (CY 2003) to:
  - discuss Action Agenda,
  - share successes and lessons learned, and
  - encourage formation of new RDTs.